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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

REPORT OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD ON ITS EIGHTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from 11 to 15 December 1995

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INTRODUCTION

1. The eighteenth special session of the Trade and Development Board was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 11 to 15 December 1995. In the course of the session, the Board held two plenary meetings - the 870th and 871st meetings. All other meetings were held in an informal setting.

2. The agenda for the eighteenth special session is reproduced in annex II below.

Chapter I

REVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY OF UNCTAD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CARTAGENA COMMITMENT AND SUBSEQUENT RELEVANT DECISIONS OF THE BOARD

(Agenda item 2)

3. For its consideration of this agenda item, the Board had before it the following document:

> "Review of the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD" - Paper submitted by the President of the Trade and Development Board (TD/B/(S-XVIII)/CRP.1).

4. Introducing the paper he had submitted on this item (TD/B/(S-XVIII)/CRP.1), the **President** said that section I reflected his own assessment of the main ideas emerging from the four rounds of informal consultations he had conducted in October-November 1995. Stemming from his own perception of the main problems identified in the course of the consultations, he had put forward a number of draft recommendations (section II) which the Board might wish to use as a starting point for its own work.

5. The spokesman for the **African Group** (Egypt) expressed support for a three-tier structure for the intergovernmental machinery, with the Board at the top, a middle tier of Standing Committees with broad policy mandates, and a third level of expert groups on technical issues. The African Group attached great importance to the consideration by UNCTAD of poverty alleviation, ECDC, commodities and the following-up to certain United Nations conferences, in particular the Social Summit. Such issues should not be sacrificed or dealt with in fragmentation in the new intergovernmental structure. In this connection, he did not feel there was a need to reduce the number of Standing Committees or to abolish any of them.

6. Regarding the functioning of the Board, his Group felt that to convene only one regular session per year might compromise the performance of the Board and its consideration of issues of special interest to Africa. He therefore believed that two sessions per year were necessary, although each session could be shortened to five working days. His Group also supported the idea of having the Board convene in executive session as often as necessary, although it had difficulty with the proposal that some of the tasks within the terms of reference of the Board should be assigned to the Bureau. In general, the Board should play

a global coordinating role in the machinery. There was a need also to ensure adequate follow-up.

7. Finally, the African Group attached great importance to the financing of the participation of experts from developing countries in UNCTAD's activities and he hoped that the Board would make a strong recommendation on this at its current session.

8. The spokeswoman for the **Asian Group** (India) agreed that the machinery should have a three-tier structure. The Board should hold one regular session every year in Autumn, at which it would discuss global economic issues on the basis of the TDR. It might also identify one or two major policy issues for concentrated attention by the secretariat. In addition, the Board could meet in executive session whenever necessary to deal with current matters. However, the Asian Group was concerned at the proposal to enhance the role of the Bureau of the Board. It would be necessary to clarify the extent of this role and its legal implications. In principle, the Board could use the Bureau to organize its work more efficiently, but this must not impair the role and authority of the Board itself.

9. The Asian Group agreed that there should be a smaller number of subsidiary bodies at the second tier, with broad and coherent mandates. These subsidiary bodies could be called Committees or Commissions. The proposal to provide greater power of decision to these bodies required some clarification. Obviously, procedural and routine issues might not require further consideration by the Board, but matters with policy and programme implications would need to be approved by the Board. Delegation of greater authority to the Standing Committees/Commissions must conform to legal requirements. The subsidiary bodies should establish expert groups as and when needed, in order to provide expert and technical inputs and recommendations for policy decisions on issues assigned to them. The groups should be relatively small in size - ideally not more than 30 members - and the life of the groups as well as the length of the meetings should be related to the fulfilment of their mandate. The travel and accommodation expenses of experts from the developing countries should be paid from the regular budget of UNCTAD to ensure that finance was not a constraint on their participation. The option of holding expert groups outside Geneva should also be kept open.

10. The representative of **Spain**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, expressed the view hat the Board might hold a single regular session once a year, with additional executive sessions as needed. At its regular session, the Board should examine, from a development angle, general trends in the world economy and international trade, set guidelines for UNCTAD's work, and review and endorse

the work of the subsidiary bodies, in order to draw general conclusions as to the prospects for development and to agree on operational conclusions. The Board should also be empowered to approve the setting up of new subsidiary bodies or the abolition of existing ones - a possibility which should not be confined exclusively to the mid-term review. In executive session, the Board should be given the authority and competence for the practical management of all UNCTAD's activities as well as for procedural matters. If necessary, the executive session could also deal with single urgent substantial issues.

11. In the view of the European Union, there must be a simpler structure and fewer subsidiary bodies, with less and shorter meetings. Far from diminishing the value of the work, such changes should improve its quality and usefulness. UNCTAD's member States and the secretariat both encountered difficulties - sometimes insurmountable difficulties - in preparing, following and analysing the work carried out at meetings, which nowadays followed one another almost without interruption. The establishment of bodies and the holding of meetings must cease to be matters of routine; they must respond to real and acknowledged needs. Accordingly, distinctions must be made between topics in which there was an on-going interest which might necessitate regular meetings, and specific topics which might be addressed at a single session. On topics of the latter type, meetings should be held only at the request of a sufficient number of member States, with the assurance that their national experts would attend. UNCTAD should also have more recourse to non-governmental experts' meetings.

12. In general, the European Union considered that meetings of subsidiary bodies should normally not last for more than three days. Their objectives should be set out clearly in terms of the anticipated results, the intended beneficiaries of those results, and the use to which they were to be put. In addition, the final dates of the meetings should not be fixed before the documentation is available in all official languages. Furthermore, the number of publications should be reviewed in order to concentrate the resources on the most important areas and to ensure a better publicity for the outcome of UNCTAD's work. The work in UNCTAD should, to a greater extent, be directed towards exchange of experiences between member States.

13. Regarding the implementation of the results of UNCTAD's work, the Board and the subsidiary bodies must ensure that meetings were effectively followed up. The Chairmen of these bodies could play an essential role in the follow-up work, in particular by forming the interface between the secretariat and the member States during the periods between meetings. Thus it would seem desirable to involve them more in this exercise, by appointing them sufficiently far in advance of meetings.

14. The representative of the **Czech Republic** stated that the Czech Republic intended to declare at UNCTAD IX that, with respect to the final documents and the objectives of technical assistance, it did not consider itself to be a country in transition.

15. The representative of the **Russian Federation** said that, in the new socio-economic situation that had arisen in the wake of the Uruguay Round, it was important to focus UNCTAD's work on the development aspects and to streamline the organizational structure so as to avoid duplication with WTO. He welcomed the attempts being made to ensure complementarity between the two organizations.

16. His delegation would like to see decisions taken to enhance the policy coordinating role of the Board and to reduce the number of Standing Committees and working groups, giving them broader mandates on policy matters. UNCTAD must maintain its dual approach to development - i.e. the global analysis of interdependence and the consideration of specific practical problems. He hoped that the TDR would continue to serve as a basis for the global analysis.

17. Regarding the Standing Committees, he felt that there should be no hasty decision to dissolve any of the existing Committees, although one could envisage changing the frequency with which they met. Services should remain a basic area of work, but the priorities within this area could be redistributed. Concerning investment, it might be appropriate to concentrate in one body FDI and its effect on trade and transfer of technology, and investment policy in developing countries and countries in transition. It was becoming more and more important to promote international competition and he supported the proposed new intergovernmental group of experts on competition policy. Regarding trade policy in general, it was important to ensure the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements and to examine in UNCTAD the new and emerging trade opportunities. Regional economic groupings had a significant effect on the trade of developing countries, especially those countries that remained outside such groupings. UNCTAD should continue its work on South-South cooperation and ECDC, but he felt that this work would benefit from a cross-sectoral approach. Finally, his delegation favoured continued work in UNCTAD on structural adjustment for disarmament, which was an issue of particular interest to the countries in transition.

18. Following UNCTAD IX, he hoped to see UNCTAD focusing still more on the exchange of national experiences, with full participation of members of the civil society. Moreover, the follow-up mechanisms should be reinforced to ensure the practical application of the outcomes of meetings.

19. The spokesman for the **Latin American and Caribbean Group** (Chile) also expressed support for the three-tiered structure of the intergovernmental machinery. Regarding the periodicity of the Board, his Group considered that there should be one single regular session per year, held in Autumn, for a maximum of ten days. In addition to the interdependence item, the Board could examine one or two other substantive items which called for a general policy debate. However, the regular session should include a two-day high-level segment on a carefully chosen substantive theme that would attract national authorities. His Group had a positive attitude to the proposal to extend the powers of the Bureau of the Board, although these powers would need to be defined and restricted to administrative/institutional matters such as the convening of executive sessions, the review of the calendar of meetings and documentation matters. As for the executive sessions, he felt that they should concentrate on the so-called "house-keeping" matters.

20. With regard to the technical expert meetings, his Group considered that such groups should be of short duration - no more than three days at most - depending on the substance of the matter addressed. It was important to set clear and more sharply focused priorities and to concentrate on them, with a view to achieving real benefits for the developing countries. However, if the technical level of the meetings was to be raised, it would be essential to resolve the problem of financing the participation of experts from developing countries. Part of the resources needed to finance their participation might be obtained from the savings that would result from the reduction in the number of meetings and from the restructuring of the institution.

21. The representative of **Japan** said that his delegation believed that the major issues that UNCTAD should cover after UNCTAD IX could be grouped into three categories: trade issues, enterprise-related issues including investment, and macro-economic issues related to development. On the basis of this perspective, his delegation wished to propose the following structure for UNCTAD's intergovernmental machinery:

(a) The Conference would discuss future direction and those issues requiring a political decision at the highest level.

(b) The Board should deal with:

(i) General directions and guidelines for UNCTAD's work;

(ii) Relevant issues not covered by the Standing Committees, including macro-economic issues as related to development;

(iii) Abolition or creation of standing committees;

(iv) Approval of the abolition or creation of working and expert groups;

(v) Procedural matters.

(c) Two standing committees should be created for trade issues and for enterprise-related issues including investment. These committees would discuss any important issues within their mandate and conduct policy dialogue on the findings of working and expert groups. They could decide on the abolition and creation of working and expert groups.

(d) A working group should be created only when a policy issue had wide-ranging implications, required concentrated work and could not be effectively dealt with in the standing committees concerned. An expert group should be created only on those issues requiring specific expert advice. In order to avoid duplication of work, these groups should be created under strict criteria. They should not aim to produce agreed conclusions nor recommendations but should attempt to clarify issues, identify policy options and report them to the standing committees where recommendations or conclusions were discussed and, if possible, agreed. Possible issues which might warrant the establishment of such groups would include commodities, GSP, trade and environment and the role of enterprises.

(e) The Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget should be strengthened so that it could make assessments and recommendations to the Board as to the achievements and effectiveness of the intergovernmental machinery and work programmes, the programme budget and technical cooperation. It was necessary to find practical ways to secure that findings and conclusions of the Working Party approved by the Board would be fully reflected in the relevant meetings in New York.

22. The gist of the Japanese proposal was that UNCTAD needed to focus its work on trade and enterprise-related issues, including investment. The two standing committees would be the central instrument in UNCTAD activities, supported by working and expert groups on very specific issues. The Board would be charged with general direction and organizational matters as well as other relevant issues not covered by the standing committees, including macro-economic issues as related to development. Those issues would be appropriate topics for

discussions by high-ranking officials attending the Board once a year. He believed that Japan's proposals would make the intergovernmental structure of UNCTAD considerably simpler without making its work scope too narrow.

23. The representative of **Norway** said that mechanisms should be developed which would strengthen the Board's policy functions. Norway was flexible regarding which concrete mechanisms should be developed, but it would be ready to support a model where the Board in regular session could be transformed into *the* annual meeting of UNCTAD. A well focused, relatively short - maximum five days - Board session would attract far more interest than such sessions had done in the recent past. It would probably also strengthen the level of participation from capitals. An executive Board, with limited representation based on equitable geographic distribution, could be established. The executive Board could meet fairly frequently, and carry out the responsibilities given to it at the annual regular session. Such a model would bring UNCTAD in line with the reformed United Nations funds and programmes, and provide an organization which was better able to respond to demands in a rapidly changing context. Giving the Bureau certain responsibilities, as referred to in the President's paper, would constitute an improvement, but he was not yet convinced that it would suffice.

24. Norway saw an urgent need to sort out the jungle of committees, ad hoc working groups, expert working groups and commissions which now constituted the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD. Increased coherence and simplicity were required, and clear lines had to be drawn between expert/technical bodies on the one hand and policy or decision-making bodies on the other. The system in which all bodies up to now had equal status, and all had reported directly to the Board, was most inefficient and time-consuming and should be altered. In order to simplify and make the structure more coherent and efficient, Norway supported the idea of regrouping UNCTAD into a limited number of standing commissions. The commissions would have to be given fairly broad mandates *within* the clearly and narrowly defined role of UNCTAD as a whole. Only the standing commissions should report to the Board. The standing commissions should have the mandate to establish expert groups. These expert groups, which must have a clearly defined periodic mandate, would report only to the standing commissions. In general, every effort must be made to achieve more efficient use of meetings and documentation resources.

25. Finally, taking into account the major dynamic role played by the private sector in the global economy, Norway considered private-sector cooperation to be imperative to the future of UNCTAD. Strategies must therefore be worked out to facilitate private-sector cooperation in order to adjust UNCTAD to the increasingly market-oriented global economy.

26. The representative of **China** shared the view that UNCTAD should establish a three-tier working structure. In order to fulfil its mandates effectively, the Board should hold two regular sessions in Spring and Autumn each year to deal with its different agenda items. Its executive sessions could meet when necessary between the two regular sessions. China could go along with the proposal to strengthen the function of the Bureau of the Board, but the terms of reference of the Bureau should be clarified and it should focus mainly on the procedural matters and issues entrusted to it by the Board.

27. On the standing committees, China held that they could operate as the subsidiary bodies of the Board, concentrating on concrete policy review and formulation in specific areas of trade and development. The terms of reference of the standing committees should be based on the three substantive items of UNCTAD IX. The standing committees could deal with international trade and preferences, trade in services, international investment and transnational corporations, and developing the market economy.

28. On the intergovernmental groups of experts, China was of the view that such groups could be set up by the standing committees when they were deemed necessary. The major function of such groups was to provide the standing committees with technical support and expert consultation. They should not be too large in size and the term of their work and frequency of meeting could be determined by the completion of their tasks. At the same time, it was hoped that positive consideration would be given to the financing of experts from developing countries with a view to assisting them to participate in the relevant meetings. The appropriate participation of NGOs, academia and the private sector could bring about new ideas to help revitalize the work of UNCTAD. However, the foremost factors for the success of UNCTAD were the policy measures based on the will of governments. Therefore, the intergovernmental nature of UNCTAD should not be diluted.

29. The representative of **Canada** expressed the view that, as a governing body, the Board had been ineffective for a number of reasons. It was too large in relation to its current mandate. It had little influence and no control over UNCTAD's budgetary priorities. The accountability of the secretariat to the Board was not well defined. The Board had no practical oversight over technical cooperation activities. It met too frequently and had tried to focus on a broad range of policy-making largely in the absence of policy experts.

30. Regarding the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget, she felt that, owing to its restricted mandate, this body had not made a sufficient contribution to the organization. Canada believed there was a need

for strengthened intergovernmental direction and oversight of the budget and programme of work.

31. Success in the past should not in itself be the sole basis on which decisions were taken for future structures. The current need for a policy dialogue in any one area was the most important indicator. In Canada's view, UNCTAD should focus on its analytical capacity-building and consensus-building mission. For this, a revised intergovernmental framework was necessary. In this connection, she shared the view that the abolition of a given intergovernmental body did not automatically mean the suppression of all work in the corresponding area.

Action by the Board

32. At its 871st (closing) meeting, on 15 December 1995, the Trade and Development Board adopted the following draft recommendations and decisions:

- Draft recommendations on the review of the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD in accordance with the Cartagena Commitment and subsequent relevant decisions of the Board (TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.4) [1/]

- Draft decision on the participation of experts in UNCTAD intergovernmental meetings (TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.3) [2/]

- Draft decision on the reports of subsidiary bodies (TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.2) [3/]

Statements made in connection with the action taken by the Board

33. With reference to recommendations 431 (S-XVIII), the spokesman for the **Asian Group** (India) observed that the Board was now entering a difficult phase in the preparatory process for UNCTAD IX. The Asian Group had participated in the current deliberations in a spirit of accommodation and compromise, and he would have liked to see all groups showing the same degree of flexibility. The Asian Group had given deep thought to the process of restructuring and its proposals, as reflected in its statement at the opening meeting, were very close

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[1/] For the recommendations, see annex I, recommendations 431 (S-XVIII).

[2/] For the decision, see annex I, decision 432 (S-XVIII).

[3/] For the decision, see annex I, decision 433 (S-XVIII). For the list of reports referred to in the decision, see annex III.

to the initial draft put forward by the President as a result of the four rounds of informal consultations. The Asian Group too was concerned at the wastage of resources and wished to secure economies and better supervision of UNCTAD's activities by the intergovernmental machinery. His Group wanted fewer intergovernmental bodies and meetings in order to allow for better preparations and follow-up. The aim was above all to strengthen the role of UNCTAD. The discussions which the Board would undertake in early 1996 on the substantive aspects of the preparatory process would have to take account of the work done at the eighteenth special session on the intergovernmental machinery. Since any agreement on substantive matters would have implications for the intergovernmental structures now being recommended, it was important to show flexibility already at this stage so that the Conference itself would be free to dovetail the structural and substantive aspects, unhampered by rigid preconceptions. It was therefore preferable for indications to emerge from the current session, rather than firm positions on the structures. The Asian Group would certainly have preferred not to go into too much detail at this stage on such matters as the number of days to be allocated to the various meetings.

34. Finally, he stated the view of the Asian Group that the following two additional sentences - which, had they been included in the recommendations, would have been located after the word "perspective" in line 10 of subparagraph 3(a) - should be placed on record in the report which transmitted the recommendations:

> "The Trade and Development Board shall take into account in particular the annual Trade and Development Report. The Board shall review the programme budget."

35. Referring also to recommendations 431 (S-XVIII), the spokesman for the **African Group** (Egypt) expressed the hope that the recommendations would be a step towards enabling UNCTAD to become even more efficient and effective. The African Group countries had difficulties and concerns with several elements of the recommendations but were prepared, in a spirit of compromise, to accept the recommendations as a consensus text. He hoped that this effort to accommodate the concerns of other groups would be recognized. It was the understanding of the African Group that these recommendations on the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD could not be divorced from the substantive discussions that would take place in February 1996. His Group had been hoping for greater flexibility in dealing with substantive issues and he trusted that certain elements in the recommendations just adopted would not prevent the Board from exercising such flexibility in the next stage of the preparatory process. In any case, it was also the understanding of his Group that the recommendations would have no bearing on UNCTAD's substantive programmes.

36. With regard to decision 433 (S-XVIII) on the reports of subsidiary bodies, the representative of **Argentina** drew attention to an omission in paragraph 5 of the agreed conclusions adopted by the Standing Committee on Commodities at its fourth session, [4/] and requested that the phrase "net food-importing countries" be amended to read "net food-importing developing countries".

[4/] See report of the Standing Committee on Commodities on its fourth session (TD/B/42(2)/5 - TD/B/CN.1/34), annex I.

Chapter II

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

37. The eighteenth special session of the Trade and Development Board was opened on 11 December 1995 by Mr. William Rossier (Switzerland), the current President of the Board.

B. Bureau of the eighteenth special session

38. There being no change in the officers elected at the first part of the forty-second session of the Board, the Bureau for the eighteenth special session was as follows:

President:	Mr. William Rossier	(Switzerland)
Vice-Presidents:	Mr. Youri Afanassiev	(Russian Federation)
	Mr. Munir Akram	(Pakistan)
	Ms. Kristie Kenney	(United States of America)
	Mr. Antonio E. Marziota Delgado	(Cuba)
	Mr. Shohei Naito	(Japan)
	Mr. Sirous Nasseri	(Islamic Republic of Iran)
	Mr. Javier Paulinich	(Peru)
	Mr. Henri Reynaud	(France)
	Mr. Jacob S. Selebi	(South Africa)
	Mrs. Appolonie Simbizi	(Burundi)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Jan Piotrowski	(Poland)

C. Procedural matters

(Agenda item 1)

Item 1 (a): Adoption of the agenda and organization of work of the session

39. At its 870th (opening) meeting, on 11 December 1995, the Board adopted the provisional agenda for its eighteenth special session, as contained in section I of TD/B(S-XVIII)/1. (For the agenda, see annex II below).

Item 1 (b): Adoption of the report on credentials

40. At its 871st (closing) meeting, on 15 December 1995, the Board adopted the report of the Bureau on the credentials of representatives attending the eighteenth special session (TD/B(S-XVIII)/2).

D. Preparations for the review by the Conference of the lists of States annexed to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX)

(Agenda item 3)

41. At the same meeting, acting on the recommendations of the Bureau, the Board decided to mandate the Vice-President, Mr. Henri Reynaud (France), to chair informal consultations and to report to the executive session of the Board on this subject in February/March 1996.

E. Other business

(Agenda item 4)

42. Also at its 871st (closing) meeting, the Board took action on the following matters:

(a) Admission of the Republic of Latvia to membership of the Trade and Development Board

The Board welcomed Latvia to membership of the Trade and Development Board.

(b) Second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trading Opportunities in the New International Trading Context

The Board decided that the second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trading Opportunities in the New International Trading Context would be held from 5 to 9 February 1996.

(c) Arrangements for the substantive preparatory process for UNCTAD IX

The Board approved a plan and timing for the substantive preparatory process for UNCTAD IX as follows: 19 February 1996 - executive session of the Board to launch the preparatory process; 20 February to 22 March 1996 - Committee of the Whole, meeting on alternate weeks; 22 March 1996 - final executive session of the Board.

F. Adoption of the report of the Board

(Agenda item 5)

43. At its 871st (closing) meeting, on 15 December 1995, the Board adopted the draft report on its eighteenth special session (TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.1) and authorized the Rapporteur to complete the final report as appropriate, under the authority of the President.

ANNEXES

Annex I

ACTION BY THE BOARD

Recommendations 431 (S-XVIII): Review of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD a/

1. As the principal organ of the General Assembly in the field of trade and development, UNCTAD provides the most appropriate focal point, within the United Nations proper, for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in key areas including trade, finance, investment, services, technology and sustainable development, in the interests of all countries, particularly those of developing countries. In the four years since the eighth session of the Conference, UNCTAD has implemented the Cartagena Commitment and confirmed the general validity of the direction taken, but there exists scope to revitalize and remodel the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD in order to make it more responsive to the needs of a rapidly changing world economy. UNCTAD's fundamental mandate is comprehensive and allows for such revitalization. This being so, and in view of the resource constraints, it is essential to establish clear priorities and to construct the intergovernmental machinery around them. Consequently, for the efficient and transparent conduct of business, the Trade and Development Board recommends to the Conference that the functioning of UNCTAD's intergovernmental machinery be based on the following guidelines:

(a) There should be greater coherence and simplicity in the intergovernmental structures, functions and reporting lines, with more clearly defined roles and functions assigned to each body. In particular, a clear distinction between policy decision-making and expert technical work should be mirrored in the structures.

(b) Decision-making should be commensurate with the level of each body in the overall hierarchy.

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a/ Originally circulated in TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.4. For the statements made by the Asian Group and the African Group in connection with these recommendations, see paras. 33-35 of the report.

(c) UNCTAD's work programme should be strengthened through improved transparency and supervision of the budget and programme of work and of technical cooperation activities.

(d) Measures should be taken to ensure effective follow-up and evaluation of the actions agreed upon.

(e) Greater attention should be given to the handling of cross-sectoral issues which have implications across UNCTAD's work programmes, including within the secretariat.

(f) Better use should be made of expert meetings of short duration to deal with technical issues.

(g) Technical matters discussed at the expert level should be reported to the relevant parent body, which may transmit them to the Board as appropriate.

(h) The calendar of meetings must be better regulated, and the overall number of meetings should be reduced. In general, simultaneous meetings and back-to-back meetings should be avoided, unless appropriate. More time should be allowed to delegations for adequate preparation and coordination. Documents should be available in all languages sufficiently in advance of meetings in accordance with the existing rules.

(i) Cooperation with, and participation by, non-governmental interests and the business/private sector should be enhanced in order to adapt UNCTAD to the gradually more market-oriented global economy.

(j) Special consideration should be given to the question of improving the participation of developing-country experts in UNCTAD technical meetings, including the question of financing their participation.

(k) The Secretary-General of UNCTAD is encouraged to strengthen cooperation and coordination with other international organizations working in related areas, such as the WTO and ITC.

2. In the course of the exercise to improve the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery, it may be necessary to consider moving an existing work programme from the body currently responsible for it to another body which may execute the work programme more efficiently. In some other cases, an existing body may be retained though its work programme may need to be modified.

3. On the understanding that the final design of the intergovernmental structures, including the number, names and mandates of individual bodies, will be determined in the light of the decisions taken on the substantive programmes, the following specific recommendations are put forward:

(a) In executing its mandated functions, the Trade and Development Board can meet in regular or executive sessions. The regular session of the Board could be convened in one part in autumn for approximately 10 working days. At that session, a segment should be included to deal with a substantive policy item with a view to attracting high-level participation. Personalities from the public, private/business and academic sectors in areas related to UNCTAD's work should be invited to attend. At its regular session, the Board would continue to deal with interdependence and global economic issues from a trade and development perspective. It would also review at its annual session progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa. The Board would also act to ensure better horizontal coordination.

(b) The Board could meet in executive session three times throughout the year, with six weeks prior notice, to deal with policy as well as management and institutional matters and when it is agreed that there are urgent matters that cannot be deferred to the regular session. Executive sessions will normally be confined to one-day's duration, as foreseen in the Cartagena Commitment.

(c) The Bureau of the Trade and Development Board would be elected at each regular session to serve for the whole year and should be authorized to despatch housekeeping business including administrative and procedural matters when the Board itself is not in session. The extent of the Bureau's authority needs to be further defined.

(d) The Board should have a smaller number of subsidiary bodies. Its immediate subsidiary bodies which may be known as Commissions would perform integrated policy work on a whole range of UNCTAD programmes in their respective areas of competence. Sessions of the Commissions should be as short as possible, not exceeding five days. The Commissions would have specific mandates and greater delegation of decision-making on matters of substance. Each Commission may convene expert meetings of short duration, not exceeding three days, the outcome of which need not be in the form of agreed conclusions. It would be for the parent Commission to consider their findings and to discuss the policy implications. Commissions should, when appropriate, make the results of expert meetings called under their auspices available to other relevant Commissions.

(e) The reports of the Commissions could record the action taken in two separate annexes, as follows:

A. Action taken by the Commission on its own authority

B. Action referred to the Trade and Development Board for final decision.

Annex A would be taken note of by the Board without discussion. Annex B would exist only when specific action by the Board is necessary.

871st plenary meeting
15 December 1995

Decision 432 (S-XVIII): Participation of experts in UNCTAD intergovernmental meetings b/

The Trade and Development Board,

Recalling conclusions and decisions 415 (XL) on the mid-term review, the agreement of the Trade and Development Board at its seventh (pre-sessional)

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b/ Originally circulated in TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.3.

executive session, c/ and the recommendations adopted at its current eighteenth special session (recommendations 431 (S-XVIII)),

Decides to request the President of the Trade and Development Board to initiate informal consultations in the context of the substantive preparatory process for UNCTAD IX on the question of the participation of experts in UNCTAD intergovernmental meetings and to request the UNCTAD secretariat to update its note "Financial implications of providing travel assistance from the regular budget to experts from developing countries, notably LDCs" (TD/B/EX(7)/L.1), and further requests statistical information on the participation, including financing, of experts in UNCTAD meetings post-Cartagena.

871st plenary meeting
15 December 1995

Decision 433 (S-XVIII): Reports of subsidiary bodies d/

The Trade and Development Board, in taking note of the reports of its subsidiary bodies containing recommendations on their future work programmes as well as some institutional follow-up:

Decides to transmit the reports to the executive session of the Board to be convened in February/March 1996 for the substantive preparations of the Conference, so that they can be taken into account in the deliberations of that session of the Board and its Committee of the Whole, particularly in relation to the substantive contents of the document to be prepared for UNCTAD IX. e/

871st plenary meeting
15 December 1995

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c/ Cf. TD/B/EX(7)/2, para. 25.

d/ Originally circulated in TD/B(S-XVIII)/L.2.

e/ For the list of reports transmitted, see annex III.

Annex II

AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SPECIAL SESSION */

1. Procedural matters:

   (a) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work of the session;

   (b) Adoption of the report on credentials

2. Review of the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD in accordance with the Cartagena Commitment and subsequent relevant decisions of the Board

3. Preparations for the review by the Conference of the lists of States annexed to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX)

4. Other business

5. Adoption of the report of the Board.

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*/ As adopted by the Board at its 870th (opening) meeting, on 11 December 1995.

Annex III

LIST OF REPORTS REFERRED TO IN BOARD DECISION 433 (S-XVIII)

TD/B/42(2)/5- TD/B/CN.1/34	Report of the Standing Committee on Commodities on its fourth session
TD/B/CN.1/31	Review of the work programme of the Standing Committee on Commodities with special emphasis on the preparations for UNCTAD IX
TD/B/42(1)/10 TD/B/CN.2/16	Report of the Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation on its third session
TD/B/CN.2/15	Review of the implementation of the work programme of the Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation, and proposed future orientation of the work of the Committee
TD/B/42(1)/7- TD/B/CN.3/16	Report of the Standing Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries on its third session
TD/B/CN.3/15	Review of the work programme of the Standing Committee on ECDC, with special emphasis on the preparations for UNCTAD IX
TD/B/42(1)/5- TD/B/CN.4/50	Report of the Standing Committee on Services (Shipping) on its third session
TD/B/CN.4/48	Review of the work programme of the Standing Committee on Services (Shipping) with special emphasis on the preparations for UNCTAD IX
TD/B/42(2)/2- TD/B/CN.4/55	Report of the Standing Committee on Developing Services Sectors on its third session
TD/B/42(2)/16- TD/B/CN.4/56	Report of the Standing Committee on Services (Insurance) on its third session
TD/B/42(2)/4- TD/B/SCP/16	Report of the Special Committee on Preferences on its twenty-second session
TD/B/SCP/14- TD/B/SCP/AC.1/3	Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Rules of Origin
TD/B/42(2)/8- TD/B/WP/94	Report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and Programme Budget on its twenty-sixth session
TD/B/42(2)/9- TD/B/WG.6/11	Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade, Environment and Development on its third session

TD/B/42(1)/17- TD/B/WG.7/8	Final report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Role of Enterprises in Development
TD/B/42(2)/3- TD/B/WG.8/4	Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Trading Opportunities in the New International Trading Context on its first session */
TD/B/42(2)/7- TD/B/WG.9/3	Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group to Explore the Issue of Structural Adjustment for the Transition to Disarmament (only session)
TD/RBP/CONF.4/15	Report of the Third United Nations Conference to Review all Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices

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*/ The second session of this Working Group is scheduled to be held from 5 to 9 February 1996.

Annex IV

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE */

1. The following States members of UNCTAD, members of the Board, were represented at the session:

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Belarus
Belgium
Bhutan
Bolivia
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burundi
Cameroon
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Denmark
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Honduras
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Latvia
Lebanon
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Madagascar
Malaysia
Malta
Mauritius
Mexico
Morocco
Myanmar
Nepal
Netherlands
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal

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*/ For the list of participants, see (TD/B/S-VIII)/INF.1.

Qatar
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
Slovakia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Thailand
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

2. The following member of UNCTAD, not member of the Board, was represented as observer at the session:

Holy See

3. United Nations Development Programme was represented at the session. The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO was also represented at the session.

4. The following specialized agencies and organizations were represented at the session:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
International Monetary Fund
United Nations Industrial Development Organization
World Trade Organization.

5. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation
Arab Labour Organization
Common Fund for Commodities
European Community
Organization of African Unity

6. The following non-governmental organizations were represented at the session:

General Category

Europe-Third World Centre
Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)
International Chamber of Commerce
International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
World Confederation of Labour
World Federation of United Nations Associations

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